



## Hittite (3rd pl. pret. act.) *kap-pí-la-a-er* ‘to pick a fight’ (or similar)

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This is the tenth in a series of papers dealing with Anatolian (Hittite) etymology. As in the previous papers, I will be using the glottalic model of Proto-Indo-European consonantism (more accurately, Proto-Indo-Anatolian consonantism — for details, cf. Bomhard 2024) followed, in parentheses (or, secondarily, brackets), by the traditional reconstruction (on which, cf. Byrd 2018).

According to Kloekhorst (2008:439—440), “[t]he etymological interpretation of this word [*kappilae-*] is difficult”. He concludes his discussion by noting: “[a]ll in all, none of the proposed etymologies are convincing”.

Puhvel (1984— .4:63—65), on the other hand, considers *kappilalli-* ‘prone to a fight, aggressive’ to be a derivative of a root *\*kapp-*, which “has no obvious etymology”. See also Tischler 1977— .1:492—493 and Friedrich 1991:99.

The following forms are attested: (3rd pl. pret. act.) *kap-pí-la-a-er* ‘to pick a fight’. Derivatives: (3rd pl. pret. act.) *kap-pí-la-aḫ-ḫe-er* ‘to get into a fight’ (NH); (nom. sg. adj.) *kap-pí-la-al-li-iš*, *kap-pí-la-al-liš* ‘prone to a fight, aggressive’. Note: Medial double writing indicates a voiceless bilabial stop.

There are several cognates in the other Anatolian daughter languages: Cuneiform Luwian (3rd sg. pret. act.) *kap-pí-la-az-za-at-ta* ‘to become hostile’; Hieroglyphic Luwian (acc. sg.) *ka-pi-la-la-li-na*, *k[a]-pi-la-li-i-na* ‘enemy’ (?).

In our search for possible cognates in the non-Anatolian daughter languages, let us begin by looking in Buck 1949 to try to determine what words are semantically related to or may be the source of words for ‘to fight’, ‘hostile, aggressive’, and ‘enemy’, the meanings found in the Anatolian forms cited above.

According to Buck (1949:§20.11 FIGHT [vb.]), the following notions are common sources of the verb ‘to fight’: ‘strike, hit, beat, etc.’ (cf. Buck 1949:§9.21 STRIKE [Hit, Beat]), while the noun ‘enemy’ (cf. Buck 1949:§19.52 ENEMY) typically comes from notions such as ‘hostile, against, unfriendly, etc.’ Consequently, words expressing these notions would be good places to look for possible cognates of Hittite (3rd pl. pret. act.) *kap-pí-la-a-er* ‘to pick a fight’ and its derivatives and related forms in Cuneiform and Hieroglyphic Luwian.

As it turns out, there is a perfect match in Greek: κόπος ‘delivering a blow, blow, strike (with a weapon); beating; buffeting (by a storm); exhaustion, fatigue; exhausting work, exertion, toil; trouble, difficulty, annoyance’, κόπτω ‘to strike with a blow, to strike, to hit, to beat; to strike at; to strike so as to kill; to strike down; to slaughter, to cut down; to knock, to knock on; to crush; to damage by striking, to batter, to smash; to slash;

to cut up, to chop; to cut off; to cut down’ (definitions from *The Cambridge Greek Lexicon*, Vol. II, p. 822) (see also Liddell—Scott 1961:978—979, 979; Beekes 2010.I: 748—749 Indo-European (?) *\*kop-* ‘to strike, to smite, to hew’; Boisacq 1950:492—493; Chantraine 1968—1980.II:563—564; Hofmann 1966:154; Frisk 1970—1973.I:915—916 Indo-European *\*qopō*).

Additional non-Anatolian cognates include: Lithuanian *kapóju*, *kapóti* ‘to chop, to hack; to cleave’, (dial.) *kapiù*, *kàpti* ‘to chop, to hew’; Old Church Slavic *kopajǫ*, *kopati* ‘to dig’; Russian *kopát’* [копaть] ‘to dig, to excavate, to hollow’; Czech *kopati* ‘to dig’; Serbo-Croatian *kòpati* ‘to dig’; Albanian *kep* ‘to hew’. Cf. Derksen 2008:233 Balto-Slavic *\*kop-* and 2015:226; Fraenkel 1962—1965.I:217—218 and 218; Orël 1998:175; Smoczyński 2007:254.

To conclude, following Puhvel’s (1984— .4:63—65) suggestion, we can reconstruct a Proto-Anatolian root *\*kap-* ‘to pick a fight, to be hostile’, which was the source of the attested Anatolian forms. This, in turn, may be derived from a Proto-Indo-Anatolian root *\*k<sup>h</sup>ap<sup>h</sup>-* (*\*kop-*) ‘to strike, to hit, to beat’. ■

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